Delaware Municipal Web Developers Group
MEETING SUMMARY

March 23, 2006
University of Delaware Paradee Center
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Attendees/Absentees

Attendees:

Cathy Beaver (Townsend), **Barbara Belli** (Wilmington), **Kathy Clifton** (Delaware City), **Marian Delaney** (New Castle), **Mark Deshon** (IPA – University of Delaware), **John Giles** (Elsmere), **Rebecca Greene** (Harrington), **Erik Hopkins** (IPA – University of Delaware), **Greg Hughes** (GIC), **Tina Law** (Elsmere), **Ed McNeely** (GIC), **Paul Morrill** (Delaware City), **David Redard** (Sussex Co.), **Tom Roth** (Henlopen Acres), **Donna Schwartz** (Fenwick Island), **Pam Smith** (South Bethany), **Eddie Sparpaglione** (Sussex Co.), **Maureen Stewart** (Townsend), **Syd Swann** (GIC), **Marie Thomas** (Ocean View), **Dell Tush** (Dewey Beach), **Amy Walls** (Seaford), **Nelson Wiles** (Lewes)

Absentees:

Mark Callan (Dover), **Cindy Fisher** (Delmar), **Mike Mahaffie** (Office of State Planning Coordination), **James Markow** (Smyrna), **Rita Shade** (Newport), **Jamie Smith** (Laurel), **Angela Townsend** (Georgetown), **Randy Westergren** (Milford)

2. Definition of Group Direction/Mission from Expressed Expectations

Participants each had the opportunity to share their expectations for the group, including what they wanted and what they could share to others. Out of this segment of the meeting, three themes kept surfacing: the desire for support, education, and networking. Thus, the following mission statement for the group could be crafted:

The mission of the MWDG is to effect **support**, **education**, and **networking** on issues relating to e-government for those in Delaware who either have oversight responsibility for or maintain a municipal/county website.

General topics, upon which proceedings of future meetings might be based, were sifted from what the participants shared about their individual needs. They are (in no particular order) as follows:

- What constitutes an e-government website?
- E-government policy, including but not limited to:
  – appropriate representation of community commercial stakeholders
  – longevity of online minutes
- Control issues
- Available sources of education/training
- Domain names
- Compliance issues
  – Accessibility (section 508)
  – W3C
- Security

3. Current Status of Local Government Websites Statewide

- All three counties have active government websites.
- 35 (of Delaware's 57) municipalities have active government websites.
- 1 town (Millville) has a non-government website (i.e., piggybacking off a county commercial site).
- 2 towns currently have websites that are inactive but under redevelopment (Camden, Delmar).
- 19 towns have no web presence.*

* Henlopen Acres is in the development process and claims a fledging page. Odessa no longer has a web presence, as it was pulled offline by the host.

4. Member Presentation: Delaware Government Information Center

Greg Hughes, director of the state's Government Information Center (GIC), gave a brief PowerPoint presentation outlining some of the state's e-government portal (Delaware.gov) web initiatives. GIC's charge is to "make online information available to citizens." Of particular interest to MWDG are partnering opportunities with and services from GIC, including content promotion, onsite evaluations, accessibility counseling, state standards, and alternative publishing methods. Greg also introduced the concept of local government domain names that define local government sites as such (e.g., www.[municipalityname].delaware.gov). There would be no additional cost to towns for adopting this format through the state. Mark Deshon mentioned that an earlier "standard" format also exists (e.g., www.tn.[municipalityname].de.us or www.ci.[municipalityname].de.us).

5. Recording of Specific Issues of Interest to Address

Each participant had an opportunity to share specific issues of interest in their particular situation. The following summarizes the input (echoed comments reflected by number within parentheses):

E-government policy (4)
Hands-on training (3)
Content management (2)
User-friendliness (2)
Control (2)
Security (2)
Networking (2)
Minutes management (2)
Software programs and resources (2)
National conferences (2)
Appropriate content
Standards
Domain name
Homepage content
Sitemaps
Change issues
Tax records online
Online permits and licenses
Technical help
Internal management
Critiquing

6. Meeting Day, Location, and Frequency

The group decided to meet on Thursdays about every four months, the next meeting taking place sometime in July. The vast majority wanted to continue meeting in Dover because of its central location.

7. Housekeeping Issues

Mark Deshon, the group's convener, has created a startup website for MWDG (**www.ipa.udel.edu/mwdg**) and will maintain this site for the group. Check for information updates. It will contain information on future meetings and summaries of past meetings. Because this is meant to be a collaborative process, you may submit information to be included (if relevant to the group), particularly on the Web Development Links and Resources page.

We all agreed that group e-mails should not contain commercial overtures of any kind. Please abide by this principle when e-mailing the entire membership.

Special thanks go to the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration for furnishing lunches for our initial meeting.